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ON HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHIC METHOD.

To Hegel has been ascribed the honor of discovering a new Philosophic Method. In the Introduction to his great central work, "The Logic," Hegel himself claims that although the method which he has "followed in that book—or rather the method which the system itself has followed—may be capable of much improvement, or more thoroughness of elaboration, as regards details, yet I know that it is the only true method." "Because," he adds, "it is identical with its object and content; for it is the content in itself, the Dialectic which it has in itself that constitutes its evolution." "The only thing essentially necessary to an insight into the method of scientific evolution is a knowledge of the logical nature of the negative; that it is positive in its results,—in other words, that its self-contradiction does not result in zero or the abstract nothing, but rather in the negation of its special content only; that such negation is not simple [or absolute] negation, but the negation of a definite object which annuls itself, and is therefore a definite negation. Hence in the result there is contained essentially that from which it resulted—which amounts to a tautology, for otherwise the somewhat would be an independent original existence and not a result."

If we restate his method and affirm it to be the process of discovering in the finite or limited what it is that constitutes its limitation or finitude, and thereby of ascending through successive syntheses to the self-limited or infinite, we shall see in that statement its substantial identity with the Platonic Dialectic. To trace out the dependent to that on which it depends is to go from the part to the whole, from that which is not self-existent to that which is self-existent. (Plato's definition we shall quote below.)

The triad—Being, Naught, and Becoming—with which Hegel begins his Logic furnishes an example of an application of the general method as well as an exhibition of what is peculiarly Hegelian. In consideration of the fact that this triad is better known than anything else of Hegel, and that it has furnished the point of attack to his most powerful

opponents—Trendelenburg in particular*—an exposition of his method in the evolution of this triad will serve to exhibit the true nature of the Hegelian Philosophy more directly than any general disquisition on its results.

Let us at once, then, proceed to grapple with this much disputed beginning of Hegelian Logic, and make, *first*, an abstract exposition of the theme; *second*, a more concrete or explanatory one; *third*, a critical one, directed towards the position of Trendelenburg. We will attempt to give Hegel's thought in our own manner.

I. Abstract Exposition.

A. *Introduction : why we begin with the category of Being.*

Whatever we postulate as a beginning of pure science must be, as such, not yet scientifically determined. It is the object of pure science to develop a system, and of course the beginning cannot be a system. Since in pure science we must not receive determinations (attributes, qualities, categories, definitions, logical terms, &c.) except those justified and defined by the system, any determination that *we* postulate, and that is not objectively evolved, must be regarded as unscientific and therefore rejected. Determination and negation are identical, and the complete removal of determination or negation should give us pure being as a beginning or starting-point of our system. Were our system to start with any other category, as for example with the Ego, that category must be as empty as pure being; if not, it would contain pure being plus determinations, and thus duality would be present before the system had evolved it. It would be ostensibly seized as a simple somewhat, and yet the mind would *mean* something else more concrete. Science has to do with what is *expressed* and not with what is merely *meant*. Hence, unless Science is to start unscientifically, it must commence with pure Being.

B. *Being : what comes of the pure thought of it.*

- I. Being is the simple undetermined.
- II. Since it is the not-determined, it is distinguished from the determined, and is already determined by the con-

* *Logische Untersuchungen.*

trast. (The abstraction from the world of concrete being here becomes explicit.)

- III. But since according to its definition (I.) it is the absolutely undetermined, it must be the negative of all determined somewhats, and hence of itself, if it is determined through contrast. It is therefore negative of itself as Being, if Being be defined at all as contrasted. Such a universal negative may be named, substantively, Naught.

Remark.—Here we have I. its definition, whence results II. its opposition or contrast, III. its self-relation. Thought endeavors to seize the object (Being) as a whole, i.e. to comprehend it in its entirety. It seizes first the abstract definition, and then proceeds to realize it as thus defined. It finds contrast, and then further, universal negation as the more adequate statement of the idea which it is contemplating.

C. Naught: the result of attempting to think it purely.

- I. Being can comply with its definition—which requires it to be kept distinct from its determination or negation—only by negating itself and thus becoming *Naught*. Naught is the negative of all Being.
- II. Naught as the negative of all Being is defined through contrast: it is distinguished from Being.
- III. But since Naught is the negation of all Being, it is the negative of itself; for if Being were regarded as the determined, Naught would be the undetermined, and hence the negative of itself as the opposite of Being (i.e. contrasted with Being); or, if Being is defined as the undetermined, then Being becomes universal negation, and Naught as the negation of Being must be the negation of universal negation or negation of itself.

Resumé.—The thought of Being is the thought of a vanishing, a negation of itself. It is hence a form of Becoming. But the thought of Naught is the thought of a self-negation or a determining of itself, hence the thought of origination or beginning to be. Naught can be thought, therefore, only as a form of Becoming. Origination (beginning) and evanescence (ceasing) are the two forms of Becoming. Becoming is the thought which results from thinking Being and Naught.

D. *Becoming: Results from trying to think the All as a Becoming.*

- I. Becoming in general is a union of Being and Naught, but a union wherein their difference vanishes and each passes into the other. The difference must persist, and likewise the annulling of that difference must persist, or else the Becoming will cease.
- II. The union of Being and Naught in the Becoming is a union wherein each is a self-annulment. Not Being nor Naught in their simple abstraction, but each a vanishing—the former as Ceasing, the latter as Beginning. Being and Naught have proved themselves no adequate categories, but in their places we have two forms of Becoming.
- III. Becoming considered by itself is a self-nugatory, for it implies duality and involves a *from* and a *to*; but not from *Being* to *Naught* nor the contrary, but from Beginning to Ceasing, and the contrary; for the difference that remains in the Becoming is that between the two kinds of Becoming only. Beginning likewise, as a form of Becoming, possesses duality and is a *from* and *to*, but for the reason stated can have in itself only the difference of the two forms of Becoming, and hence contains within it its own opposite; Ceasing, too, contains in itself its opposite in so far as it is Becoming. Hence the difference upon which Becoming rests also vanishes, and each side becomes identical through its evolution of its opposite from itself. Thus instead of Becoming we have rather determined (or definite) Being. Each form of Becoming is a process that returns into itself through its opposite, and by this each becomes the total process, and the total process is a present unity of Being and Naught or of Beginning and Ceasing.

Note.—The “*from* and *to*” involved in Becoming is not a spatial one. If Spatial, then we have a concrete form of Becoming, to wit, motion. But Becoming involves only beginning and ceasing, and this applies as well to ideas as to natural things, and hence includes spatial motion under it as one species distinct and separate from the activity of thinking as another species. All spatial motion is measured in feet or decimals of a foot, but ideas do not admit of such measurement, and the activity of passing from one to another is therefore non-spatial.

Remark.—This deduction will seem wholly arbitrary and a mere play of words to most people. All exposition of

pure thought—that in Plato's *Parmenides*, for example—seems arbitrary word-jugglery.

Let us go over the ground once more in a more explanatory and familiar manner, when some of the difficulties may clear up.

II. Explanatory Exposition.

BEING AND NAUGHT.

I wish to know the truth—to think it; and by truth I mean the abiding, that which is universally and necessarily valid, and all that is involved in it.

How shall I begin? I wish to think the truth, the abiding, that which must be as it is and can be nothing else. Hence I am to find the universal conditions of Being; and these universal conditions must result from Being itself as its nature. Let me think Being then and see what else is implied.

If I think Being as self-sufficing, I do not set it opposite to Naught as something else than it, for thus it would receive distinction or determination through this very contrast. I must think Being by itself; as excluding all multiplicity, for the multiple can be only where there is distinction of parts, and distinction is negation or Not-being. Hence if I would not let in the opposite of Being (or Non-being) into my thought of the same, I must think being as simple and undetermined; otherwise it will be a self-contradiction—it will be a being that contains negation or limitation already.

Having now before me the thought of pure simple Being, let me examine it. What is pure simple Being? It is—undetermined; it has no content; it is—Naught. It cannot differ from Naught; for if it did, it would differ by means of some characteristic or determination, and this would render its simple pure Being, determined Being. I think pure Being, therefore, as identical with Naught when I think it by itself. "It at once becomes its opposite"? No, it does not become its opposite; it *is* Naught, and does not seem *to become* it. Let me pause, however, and consider the result at which I have arrived. For it is clear that in trying to seize Being purely by itself, and without negation or limitation, I have arrived at a dead result identical with Naught. I set out with the resolve to think Being pure and simple, and even with-

out opposition or contrast. But by removing all difference from it I get only Naught as a result. I must, however, investigate this result and see what implications my thought of it contains.

What do I mean by the thought of Naught? It is the thought of the negation of All—a negation by itself, for I am considering each category by itself, as a universal. It is the negation of all, and yet is all. But as such it is a negation of itself. Either it is a negation which does not negate anything, or it is a negation that negates itself. It is the content of its own negation. At all events, the thinking of negation in the universal form of Naught gives as result the cancelling of negation.

Here we are arrived at a very strange view. At first, Being seemed identical with Naught without Becoming,—two names for one concept; now, Naught has shown itself to involve self-opposition; it is inherently antithetic, and posits distinction or difference instead of identity. It therefore posits duality, and the duality of Being and Naught rises before us as an immediate distinction which cannot be resolved into any other or more simple one. Being and Naught are opposites and contradictories, and yet are this only when in one unity. If we try to seize them isolatedly each becomes the opposite of itself, and each has no truth or meaning outside of the synthetic thought which unites them.

Note.—A psychological question arises: Why is not the absolute Naught, the *Nihil negativum*, entirely outside of all relation or contrast, and hence, no “negation of all”? It is made relative by thinking it as active negation. It seems, therefore, an assumption to pass from “naught” to “negation of all”—an unwarrantable substitution, a *petitio principii*. Of course, so soon as one can see Naught to be a self-negation, the dialectical self-movement must be apparent. Hegel has omitted any notice of this point in treating of Being, Naught, or Becoming, but has elucidated the question in its proper place under “*Reflexion*” (vol. ii. of the large *Logic*) and also under “*Begriff*” (vol. iii. of the same). In the third or critical exposition of this subject, which follows, an endeavor will be made to clear up this point.

BECOMING.

If I review my result, it is this: my thought of Being is a thought of the becoming of Naught—a ceasing to be, a de-

parting, an evanescence. My thought of Naught is a thought of the becoming of Being—a beginning to be, an arising or origination. These I perceive are two species of Becoming, and they exhaust the genus. These appear distinct, and their distinction is the distinction which I formerly supposed I saw between Being and Naught, but which proved on examination to be really a distinction between these two kinds of Becoming. I note also that Becoming cannot be a becoming of Naught or of Being, for each of these latter categories has shown itself to be in reality a species of Becoming.

Is this distinction between the two forms of Becoming a true and abiding one? Is Becoming the “solvent word” which explains the All?

Let me examine this distinction more closely: the Becoming is a duality, it is a *from* and a *to*: a union of distinct somewhats in the process of uniting. Ceasing is *from* Being *to* Naught; Beginning is *from* Naught *to* Being. Becoming is the term indifferently applied to either. But Ceasing cannot become Naught, for the thought of pure Naught showed it to be a self-dirempting, a Beginning. Hence Ceasing can only cease in Beginning. Beginning cannot become Being, for pure Being is a self-nugatory whose more adequate statement is Ceasing. Hence Beginning is a movement towards Ceasing, inseparable from it, and therefore no simple pure species of Becoming, but rather a movement that is at once “reflected into itself.” Beginning is a movement from itself to Ceasing which is a movement to Beginning. Each species of Becoming has the other species as its own content. Each process traced out is a becoming of itself through the becoming of its other. Beginning becomes Ceasing, which, again, becomes Beginning. Such a process to itself through its other has been called “Reflection into itself.”

The form of Reflection into itself cannot be considered as a Becoming. Its form is that of self-relation. Each of its sides is reflected into itself through the other, and hence each is identical with the other. Each is itself *plus* the other in one process. Becoming can persist only so long as the inequality or non-identity of the two sides persists. The becoming of the same from the same is no becoming; it is rather an unchangeable continuance of one phase.

I must, therefore, seek another name, since Becoming is no longer an appropriate predicate for the All. Being and Naught were no adequate designations of the All; they were mere phases of the process of Becoming. The phases Beginning and Ceasing vanish in more comprehensive processes. Instead of Being, Naught, or Becoming, I have before me the thought of the Determining of Being: two forms of self-relation, Being or Ceasing returning into itself through Naught or Beginning, and the opposite of this, i.e. Naught reflected into itself through Being. Here is Determination: determined Being and determined Naught. The abyss of difference that yawned for me between Being and Naught is now narrowed to that between Reality and Negation, the two forms of determined Being. Each is a form of Being, for each begins and ends with itself, i.e. has the form of self-sufficiency, and not the form of dependence or of relation to another.

Remark 1.—We note that the Dialectic movement carries with it two threads which are ever becoming identical in a new Category. Thus at first our two threads were Being and Naught; next, Beginning and Ceasing, whose general name is Becoming; then, again, Reality and Negation, the sides of Determined Being. These two threads become identical in the respect wherein they were first distinguished, and this their identity is a new Category. But their distinction reappears in the new Category, as a less essential one.

Remark 2.—Upon inspection of the Dialectic movement one will see that it is not a method of proceeding from a first principle “which continues to remain valid”—as, e.g., some mathematical axiom. One is rather engaged in a process of proving his first principles to be untrue or inadequate, and is leaving them behind him as abstract untrue elements and arriving at comparatively concrete and true ones. Each new category is richer in what it contains than the preceding, for it is a unity resulting from a synthesis of what has gone before.

Remark 3.—Thus the dialectical procedure is a retrograde movement from error back to truth, from the abstract and untrue back to the concrete and true; from the finite and dependent back to the Infinite and Self-subsistent. We are proceeding toward a First Principle rather than from one.

In Plato's Republic, book vii., chapter xiii. (*Stallbaum*), a clear distinction is drawn between the Dialectic Method (*ἡ διαλεκτικὴ μέθοδος*) of pure science (*ἐπιστήμη*), which

cancels one after the other its hypothetical categories or principles on its way to the highest principle (τὰς ὑποθέσεις ἀναρροῦσα ἐπ' αὐτὴν τὴν ἀρχήν), and Geometry with its kindred sciences, which use fixed hypotheses or axioms (ἕως ἄν ὑποθέσεις χρώμεναι ταύτας ἀκινήτους ἕῳσι, μὴ δυνάμεναι λόγον διδόναι αὐτῶν) and are not able to deduce them. Thus our hypothetical "Being," "Naught," &c., have been removed on our way to the first principle.

Remark 4.—We do not lose any of our categories, but only reduce them to subordinate elements ("moments"). The unity wherein they are thus annulled is called a "Negative Unity."

Remark 5.—Hegel's logic in this manner proceeds to show up one after another all the general ideas or categories of thought, finding for each the exact place in the series which its extension and comprehension gives it. The highest and ultimate is the IDEA as definition of Personality—the self-conscious Absolute, the νόησις νοήσεως which Aristotle finds to be the highest, and which Theology defines as God.

Before arriving at this point such questions have arisen as :

- (1) Is not all this a play on words?
- (2) If not a play on words, is it not merely a subjective play of thought, and not in anywise a process related to objective truth?
- (3) Do you not in every instance presuppose concrete categories (movement, for example) as underlying the pure thoughts with which the dialectic begins?
- (4) If you were really to begin without presuppositions, could you find any language into which to translate your results? Do you not in fact merely translate one set of categories into another set not scientifically deduced?

In order to clear up these and a multitude of other similar objections which have no answer in the foregoing expositions the following considerations are presented. Those acquainted with the objections of Trendelenburg and others will perhaps see their pertinence best.

III. Critical Exposition.

A. "*The presuppositionless Beginning.*"

1. That Pure Science should begin without presupposition means that it should begin with an idea that is not analytically resolvable into simpler ones. If the idea with which we begin involves others simpler than it, we should discover ourselves in the act of thinking those simpler presuppositions while on our way to think the beginning; that is to say, if we turned our attention fully upon our unconscious processes.

Our attempted beginning would be a farce, for we should at once repudiate it: our first thinking would result in detecting the ideas implicit in it, and from these elements we should make a new commencement.

2. In science all should be explicit, or should become so. A term should not *mean* more than it is defined to mean. But when we claim that Pure Science should begin without assuming results implicitly contained in some synthetic idea, we do not mean that Pure Science does not imply or presuppose—(a) that the philosopher who is to understand it must have ideas and names for them; (b) that his progress will consist in recognizing, in the Pure Science, ideas before familiar to him and known by name. He will learn in Pure Science to know their necessity, scope, and affiliation. A familiar unscientific knowledge goes before a scientific one. The description of the categories of Pure Science must at the beginning be made by means of terms not yet dialectically examined. Trendelenburg criticizes Hegel (*Logische Untersuchungen*, 2^o. *Auflage*, p. 37 sqq.) for using the expression “unity” in speaking of the “unity of Being and Naught in the Becoming.” It was a presupposition surreptitiously brought in where all presupposition was expressly excluded. So, too, he points out the expression “pure abstraction,” and more especially the idea of “movement” where Hegel says of Being and Naught, “Their truth is therefore this *movement* of the immediate vanishing of the one in the other: Becoming, &c.” The idea of movement, says Trendelenburg, “is the vehicle of the dialectic evolution in thought.”

Here is a misunderstanding of the sense in which presupposition is applied. Trendelenburg would demand strictly that Pure Science should, according to Hegel, generate not only its ideas from the *à priori* activity of thought, but also the names and predicates applied to them. He would prohibit any recognition of any determinations that arose in thought, for recognition would imply that the ideas were known before in some shape, and hence were presupposed and not originated. Such a demand completely stultifies all pure science inasmuch as the latter sets out with the express problem before it of deducing the content of experience, or at least the form of experience, and every result in pure science

must consequently be an identification (act of recognition) of its *à priori* determinations with the content of experience. Only in this way could science explain anything by exhibiting its origin and necessity.

3. It can, however, be reasonably asked of pure science that it shall at its close leave no category of pure thought undeduced. Each category must exhibit what ideas it presupposes as its elements or moments analytically contained in it, as well as what ideas it demands either to complement its defects, or to transcend and include it in a higher totality. But science cannot deduce all ideas at once. Its beginning must be made with the simplest idea and the others must be introduced in the order of their complexity. Pure science cannot be said to be complete until it explains and deduces the simple idea with which it began. It must be a circle.

4. We may call thinking finite so long as it is involved with a content foreign to itself—i.e. with some matter of Experience derived from the senses. Through the act of Reflection (in the form of analysis and abstraction) thought steps back from the world of Experience and contemplates its own generalizations or abstractions. The *summum genus* of such generalization is Being. When it abstracts from all multiplicity and says all things in the world are, or have Being, Being is contemplated as the ultimate result of analysis. Thought has cut off one by one all special determinations (properties, characteristics, attributes, predicates), and now has before it the empty form of itself: of itself, because experience gave only the multiplicity, and analysis has eliminated it all. Being is therefore the empty form of pure thought from which all content has been removed. It is justly considered a great era for Philosophy when the Eleatics announced Being as the highest principle. It was the first time that a Philosophy had announced a pure thought for its principle. Neither Pythagoras nor Heraclitus did this explicitly. When thought becomes its own object it assumes the form of the infinite; i.e. it is no longer limited by and dependent on an external object, but is self-limited and independent, in its cognition.

5. Being is the limit of Analytic thinking. How does thought become synthetic and find its way back to concrete

Categories? Simply by extending its consciousness into self-consciousness. In reflection it is conscious of the object and of its negative power of abstraction. In the speculative activity of thought it must objectify its entire activity and observe it. In sense-perception only the object is known, and no notice is taken of the function performed by thought in furnishing the general ideas through which we recognize the object. In reflection we recognize the general ideas as the basis of the particular. In the speculative we must cognize the primitive synthesis of Reason which makes it possible. Reflection, therefore, always recognizes only dead results. It fails to grasp the synthetic movement that takes place unconsciously in the mind, as its counterpart.

B. The Dialectic: how synthesis arises from analysis.

6. Being is defined as the undetermined. Abstraction has removed all determinations in order to seize Being purely. But if we now try to seize Being and realize its definition in thought, we come upon this contradiction: it is defined as indefinite. When we attempt to seize Being as the negative of all, we seize it as determined and defined by this negative attitude. We correct this act of determination and limitation of the idea of Being by recurrence to the definition of indeterminateness, and hence we think it as negative to itself as thus defined and limited. It flees itself. We thus find our thought of Being an infinite regress: first we apply a predicate to it, but we immediately annul the predicate on account of its inconsistency; we continue to annul its predicates, but the act of annulling them is the act of predicating them. Predicatelessness is itself a predicate, and to think without the act of predication is impossible. Hence our thinking activity necessarily posits a self-negative idea when it posits Pure Being. It posits a regress *ad infinitum*: a vanishing; an idea which perpetually finds itself in opposition and thus has become a particular, and therefore annuls itself and escapes beyond itself. It is a self-remover, a self-negative. It must flee all particular, i.e. retire to the extreme of simplicity; but thus it goes into self-contradiction, for it should be pure from all relations or antitheses, and hence pure from purity.

But such a thought is no longer simply analytic, but an active synthesis—the thought of self-determination or self-annulment.

7. Self-annulment of Being is a form of Becoming. In our synthetic act as the totality of the thought of Being, we have Becoming in both forms. As Being it is a self-cancelling = ceasing-to-be. But it is just as much an act of opposition or antithesis in itself, and hence a specializing or particularizing of itself, a becoming of something or a beginning-to-be. Thus it is an activity of determining itself while in the act of annulling determinations; and vice versa. This remarkable result we have arrived at only through observing our whole thought, its process as well as its results. Reflection noted results; the speculative thought notes processes as well.

8. Becoming is then the more adequate name of the object of pure thought as it is now before us. But it is Becoming as a process which unites two counter activities each of which is a becoming. A tendency *to*, and a tendency *from*, are the extremes of its activity. But each of these extremes is likewise dual, and sustains itself only through its opposite. The Ceasing (or self-annulment of Being) is only an activity of self-opposition by which it reduces its simple empty being to a definite particular—and thus it is a Beginning. But it is the latter only in so far as it is an active cancelling of such opposition and particularization. Hence we now see that our activity is a circular one and returns back into itself continually. Becoming is therefore now seen to be no adequate designation of the synthesis before us. It is a self-sustained process of determination (called by Hegel *Daseyn*) which we may call determined Being.

We can proceed further to examine the adequacy of our new designation and trace out its synthesis of the two counter movements which we recognized in it as (a) Beginning returning into itself through Ceasing, and (b) Ceasing returning into itself through Beginning.

This is enough, however, to show the critical basis of Hegel's method, and to furnish a key to the insight into the difference between its procedure and that of the Analytical Reflection. Plato's "Knowing by wholes" (i.e. knowing the results in their entire process) has here its explanation.

C. *Pure Thought objective as well as subjective.*

9. We now will inquire briefly what are the grounds of the assertion that this pure thought has objective validity and furnishes the key to the explanation of the world of Experience.

Pure thought is the universal and necessary form of thought and hence the net result of all thought. What is found in pure thought is the thought which underlies all concrete thinking. Pure thought brings to consciousness the whole process, while in ordinary thinking we know only the results of our thinking activity, and not only can give no account of the process within us, but for the most part never suspect the existence of such a process. We refer the results of the unconscious dialectic process within us to an objective origin.

Thought exhibits its process exhaustively in pure science. Hence it would be as impossible to think of an objective existence which transcended the categories of pure thought as it would be to think without thinking. Any special act of thought can be analyzed at once, and the pure thought which lies at its basis exhibited. The possibility of all special thinking lies primarily in pure thinking.

Not only is it impossible to think or express anything that transcends the categories of pure thought, but the speculative insight is certain of the universal and necessary objective validity of what it recognizes as the total process of the thinking activity. It is perfectly certain that what it finds true of quantity in general can never be untrue of quantity in particular. For the thought of any particular quantity is limited by the thought of quantity in general. So of Cause and Effect, of Substance, Essence, Design, &c. When we determine *a priori* a mathematical theorem we are perfectly certain that we can never experience its opposite in Space or Time. For it is the logical condition of the existence of phenomena in Time and Space. So pure thought is the logical condition of all thought, and hence no one can ever cognize an experience other than through it and in accordance with it.

10. In fancy or imagination our thinking activity exhibits its arbitrariness and caprice, and hence in them we do not

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find objectively valid thoughts. Even Reflection is an activity partly confined to images which it is unable wholly to transcend. It cannot seize the living process, and is therefore inadequate to state what is universally and necessarily valid in the objective world. The Speculative Reason, however, is occupied solely in the contemplation of this living process not only as defined in pure thought, but also as manifested in the world of Experience.

11. Think in universals. Place every idea "under the form of eternity"; i.e. make it universal, and see what will come of it. Its dialectic will then appear. The dialectic is the soul of the whole revealing itself in the part. The partial exhibits its implications or presuppositions when it is posited as universal by thought. Trace out these implications and the true whole will appear.

12. That there hovers before the mind a "presupposition of the world from which abstraction has been made" when one discusses pure being, is a critical saying of Trendelenburg. Undoubtedly he is right; but of what nature is this presupposition? It is not a presupposition of some idea more simple than Being—of some idea that must be thought before thinking Being. On the contrary, Being is the idea that must necessarily be thought prior to the idea of the world. Let one endeavor to think the world (or any other concrete idea), and his first mental act will be the predication of the undetermined Being of it: the world is. The second act of thought will necessarily be the simple first determination of it—the thought of its negation or limit. The next thought (whether this process is conscious or unconscious, it is, all the same, involved in every mental act of seizing an idea) will be that of the synthesis of its Being and its limit, and only after these three steps will the mind recognize before it the definite being of its object. These three steps are rarely separated consciously; their result alone is seized as the first step. The triad Being, Naught, and Becoming, takes us but a little way forward in Logic. Hegel considered it the nadir of pure thought, and opposite to it held up the idea of Personality as the zenith of his system (*"Die höchste zugespitzte Spitze"*). But the spirit of his method may be exhibited even in these barren abstractions.

The Dialectic is a process of passing from Seeming to Truth. Pure Science furnishes the general formulas for the solution of all problems. It is a Calculus, a general theory without which particular solution is impossible, inasmuch as it underlies all synthesis.

NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS.

In the present number of the Journal we offer our views on the Method of Hegel as a contribution to the settlement of the question of Speculative Dialectic. If we can only ascertain what thoughts and ideas in our minds have the most unmistakable universality (of application) and necessity, we can ascertain what thoughts and ideas have the most objective validity. For what we *must* think on a given subject is the logical condition of all experience regarding that subject. The article to which we refer is the result of thirteen years' thinking on Hegel's results. The third or "critical exposition" is the final (and to us satisfactory) statement which explains the other views. It is made with special reference to the objections of Trendelenburg, in regard to the matter of presupposition and beginning, as well as the objections of English and American writers, who generally attack the objective validity of Hegel's Logic.

The following notes on Vera's polemic against Trendelenburg will be of interest here :

Vera on Trendelenburg.

Mr. Editor :

I have just been reading over the article in No. 25 of the Journal of Speculative Philosophy, entitled "Trendelenburg on Hegel's System," and translated from the Preface of Prof. Vera's Introduction to Hegel. The title should have been—should it not?—"A. Vera on Trendelenburg"; for the article is a series of observations on Trendelenburg's supposed doctrines, and not an account of Trendelenburg's famous criticism of the dialectic method. The stand-point and consequent doctrine attributed to Trendelenburg seem to me so different from those really held by him, that I have thought it might be worth while, for the benefit of any among your readers who have not made a special study of Trendelenburg's works, to write a few words of explanation and correction.

I. The logic of Trendelenburg is not written from the stand-point of the Hegelian logic. Since M. Vera, after asserting the contrary, himself ad-